GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2114
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2007
R & D IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
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Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the India's investment in R&D remains below the required level as compared with the other developing countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government proposes to liberalize R&D system to enhance scientific activities in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof and steps taken or proposed to be taken in this regard;

(e) whether the Government has submitted any plan for R&D in the Science and Technology to the Planning Commission for 11th Five Year Plan;

(f) if so, the details thereof? (g) whether the Government is considering to set-up an autonomous body to carry on the task of scientific and technological research; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) & (b): According to the available official statistics, the expenditure on Research and Development (R&D) as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is lower compared to that of a few developing countries like Brazil and China, but it is higher compared to several developing countries like Argentina, Cuba, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. In absolute terms, India's R&D expenditure has increased over the years from Rs.16198.78 crores in 2000-01 to Rs.18000.16 crores in 2002-03 and is further expected to be of the order of Rs.21639.58 crores in 2004-05. The R&D expenditure as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the year 2002-03 was around 0.80%.

(c) & (d): The Government through its policy amendments expressed indications to enhance scientific activities in the country with increased participation from the private sector as is the case with the developed counties such as UK, USA, Japan etc. Apart from increasing the successive S&T plan outlays of Scientific Departments/Agencies, the Government have taken various initiatives to encourage investment on R&D in industry through several fiscal incentives and other support measures such as support in the form of grants for industrial R&D projects, support to R&D projects through sector specific programmes of various scientific and economic Ministries, income tax relief on R&D expenditure, weighted tax deduction for sponsored research, custom duty exemption on goods imported for use in Government funded R&D projects, tax holiday, national awards for outstanding R&D and encouraging public-private R&D partnerships.

(e) to (h): Yes, Sir. A detailed plan has been submitted to the Planning Commission for R&D in Science and Technology with many new initiatives including the
(i) SERB
(ii) Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) including Scholarships in Science in Higher Education (SHE),
(iii) Mega Facilities for Basic Research,
(iv) Security Technologies,

(v) Water Technology
(vi) Innovation Clusters etc. Government is proposing to set up an autonomous Science & Engineering Research Board (SERB) to promote and strengthen Science and Engineering research in the country. The Board is expected to function in an autonomous manner to enhance scientific research activities and promote excellence.